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# Food Storage

*Keeping your home hazard-free*

# S A F E FAMILY



## Food Storage

- ✓ The temperature in the refrigerator should be between 34 and 40 degrees F (optimum temperature is 37 degrees), and the freezer should be zero or lower.
- ✓ Keep a refrigerator thermometer in both sections (you can buy them at hardware and home-supply stores). Place the thermometers in the center of the middle shelves.
- ✓ Keep your refrigerator clean. Immediately wipe up spills with hot, soapy water and rinse.
- ✓ Refrigerate or freeze meat and poultry as soon as you get home from the store.
- ✓ Thaw foods in the refrigerator; under cold, running water; or in a microwave right before cooking. Don't thaw foods on counter tops.



**For more safety resources, visit**  
**[safetycenter.navy.mil](http://safetycenter.navy.mil)**

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## Food Storage

- ✓ Each week, throw out expired foods that you no longer should eat.
- ✓ Divide leftovers into small portions and store them in shallow, tightly sealed containers (two inches deep or less). Date leftovers so you know how long they've been in the refrigerator. Discard cooked leftovers after four days.
- ✓ Keep the refrigerator door closed as much as possible, and don't store perishable foods like milk or eggs in the door. Store eggs in their carton on an inside shelf.
- ✓ Perishable leftovers from a meal should not stay out of the refrigerator more than two hours. In hot weather (90 degrees Fahrenheit or above), this time is reduced to one hour.



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- ✓ If you are going away for an extended period, or if your power is prone to going out, before you leave put an ice cube in a sandwich bag in your freezer. If you come back to an ice blob instead of an ice cube, the power has gone out and you should discard your perishables.
- ✓ Frozen or refrigerated foods that have been warmed to more than 40 degrees for two or three hours may not be safe to eat.
- ✓ Frozen foods that have thawed and have warmed to above 40 degrees should be eaten immediately.
- ✓ Don't refreeze meat that has thawed.



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